THE CHANGING FACE OF AMERICA
A Multicultural America: How did it happen?

Since the Colonial days, America’s people have been predominantly white. The most recent census, in 2000, showed that white Americans made up 75 percent of the population.

But since this country’s earliest days, there have been large groups of non-white people. In this section, you will learn more about the contributions these groups have made to life in America. In the process, you can learn a little about your own cultural heritage and how you and other Americans fit into the big picture — together.

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Golf Web http://www.golfweb.com

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We’re all from somewhere else

The United States is a land of immigrants. Even the Native Americans came from somewhere else, wandering across the Bering Strait from Asia thousands of years ago.

Most immigrants come here for a better life, searching for political or religious freedom or economic opportunity. Others follow family who came before them.

Where do immigrants come from? In earlier years, they came mostly from Europe and Asia. When the potato famine in 1845 devastated Ireland, for instance, thousands of Irish people came to America.

One group of people who came to America did so unwillingly. Africans were forced onto crowded ships and hauled to our country to work as slaves.

Today, a majority of people who come from other countries to the United States are of Hispanic and Asian descent. Most come from Mexico, the Philippines, Cuba, Korea, Vietnam, and China, and most are searching for better economic opportunities or to get away from turmoil in their own countries.

Describing America

For years, people have tried to come up with a metaphor to describe our country and its many cultures. Jewish immigrant and playwright Israel Zangwill came up with the most well-known of these phrases when he called America “the great melting pot.” But different cultures don’t lose their distinctive flavor.

American society can also be called a “kaleidoscope.” When you twist or turn a kaleidoscope, the mirrors and bits of glass inside take different shapes and forms. Like the kaleidoscope, American culture is constantly changing and endless patterns are possible.

Activities

1) A metaphor is a word or phrase used to express an elaborate idea in a simple, colorful way. Journalists often use metaphors to make a difficult or complex concept easier to grasp. Most metaphors are visual and vivid — like Israel Zangwill’s description of America as a “melting pot.” Look through your newspaper for metaphors. Make a list of them, then discuss your findings.

2) Salad bowl, melting pot, kaleidoscope ... there are many ways to describe our multicultural society. Here’s a challenge for you. Brainstorm with your classmates and come up with some new metaphors. Discuss the pros and cons of each.

3) Pretend you are an immigrant who has just arrived in the United States with $1,000 in your pocket and a suitcase in your hand. You speak some English and have a high school education. Look in your newspaper’s classified advertisements and find five jobs you could apply for and five types of housing you could afford to rent.

4) Invite an immigrant to speak to your class. Prepare a list of reporter’s questions to ask your guest.

5) As a class, brainstorm a list of reasons why an immigrant would want to live in your city or state. Make your “case” with information and pictures from your newspaper.
Long the country’s largest minority group, African-Americans now number about the same as Americans of Hispanic descent — just over 12 percent of our population.

The African-American journey:

African-Americans have the unfortunate distinction of being the only group to come to America against their will. They were brought here as slaves.

For 300 years, beginning in the 1500s, millions of slaves from western Africa were sold to Europeans who took them to the colonies that became the United States and the countries of Latin America. From the early 1600s to the mid-1800s, African slaves provided much of the labor on large farms and plantations, especially in the Southern states. But many Northerners saw the institution of slavery as cruel and contrary to a democratic society. It became an issue between the North and South that eventually led to war.

The Civil War brought about an end to slavery, but African-Americans struggled against segregation, the loss of rights, and other forms of discrimination for years.

Out of that struggle, the Civil Rights Movement was born. Today, though hardship still exists, the lives of many African-Americans have greatly improved.

For instance, more African-Americans have been elected to government posts — from 33 in 1941 to almost 9,000 in 1999. Black businesses have thrived, growing from 190,000 in 1970 to 690,000 in the mid-1990s. And more African-Americans are earning high school diplomas, up from 39 percent in 1960 to 87 percent in 1997.

People of Diversity and Distinction

Toni Morrison

In 1993, author Toni Morrison was awarded one of the world’s greatest prizes — the Nobel Prize for Literature. With that honor came the distinction of being the first African-American and only the eighth woman to receive the prestigious award.

Morrison writes about the black experience. One of her best-known novels is the Pulitzer Prize-winning *Beloved*, which describes the harrowing life of one slave woman.

Born in 1931, Morrison grew up in a multicultural community. Her hometown of Lorain, Ohio, had a mixed population of immigrant Europeans, and Mexicans, and Southern blacks. She attended an integrated school.

After Morrison graduated from college, she became an editor at Random House and edited books by black authors. She also began writing herself. Today, she remains a successful author and professor.
**A True Renaissance**

Most African-Americans were treated as second-class citizens in the early 1900s. But a number of talented African-Americans, mostly writers and artists in New York City’s Harlem community, came forward in a movement that became known as the Harlem Renaissance.

Writers such as James Weldon Johnson, Langston Hughes, and Nella Larson penned extraordinary works that both blacks and whites were eager to read. Black musicians, such as W.C. Handy, Duke Ellington, and Louis Armstrong, likewise rode to great fame on their immense talents.

The Harlem Renaissance ended during The Great Depression, but it forever changed the perception of the black culture and ensured that African-Americans’ talents would no longer go untapped.

The latest music form made popular by African-American groups is rap, music that is part chant, part rhyme. It is one facet of hip-hop, a youth culture combining the traditions of African-Americans, West Indians, and Puerto Ricans.

**Ironing out their success**

Several African-American women have been successful inventors. Sarah Boone invented the ironing board with collapsible legs in 1892. About the same time, Sarah Breedlove Walker developed a hot straightening comb and conditioning compound for African-American women. Walker’s invention was so successful, in fact, that she became the first African-American self-made millionaire.

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**Activities**

6) Find and clip stories, photos, and other information from the newspaper that illustrate African-American contributions to our society. Discuss what life would be like without these important contributions.

7) Find a newspaper story about an issue facing the African-American community. In a small group, write a rap song that tells the story.

8) Discrimination is against the law, but that doesn’t stop it from happening. Look in the newspaper for stories about individuals or groups who think they have been discriminated against. Analyze the causes and effects of the issue involved, then discuss your thoughts.

9) Advertising often reflects the “changing face of America.” Find a newspaper ad that is targeted specifically to members of the African-American community. Be prepared to explain your thoughts.

10) Look through the newspaper for stories about a person’s civil rights being taken away. Think about how you use your civil rights every day. Make a list of five activities you would miss most if your civil rights were taken away.

11) Find a local or national African-American personality featured in your newspaper. Imagine that you have the chance to interview him or her. Write a list of reporter’s questions you would like to ask.

12) Find a comic strip that features an African-American character. Read the strip each day for a week, then make a list of the ways he or she reflects the African-American culture. Discuss your thoughts with the class.
How they came to America:

The Hispanic influence is deeply embedded in America’s history. Spanish explorers set up colonies in the Southeast and Southwest long before the United States even existed.

In the early 1900s, poor economic conditions in Mexico led many Mexicans to this country in search of a better life.

That wave of immigration slowed in the 1930s, but the number of Hispanic people entering the United States began to rise again by the mid-1900s. They came not only from Mexico but from Puerto Rico and Cuba, as well.

Today, Hispanic immigrants continue to come to the United States. While many still come from Mexico, Puerto Rico, and Cuba, Hispanics from El Salvador, Nicaragua, and other Central American countries are also coming to the United States. Some are teen-agers and children whose parents have been killed in conflicts.

People of Diversity and Distinction

Gloria Estefan

In the late 1970s, Cuba native Gloria Fajardo was a quiet college psychology major living in Miami. She played the guitar and sang, mostly in the privacy of her bedroom. Music helped relieve the stress of caring for her chronically ill father.

The young woman’s life changed when she met Emilio Estefan Jr., a young bandleader who realized that beneath Gloria’s shyness was a great talent. She joined his band, the Miami Sound Machine, and gradually moved into the spotlight. After graduating from college, Gloria married Estefan.

The Miami Sound Machine appealed to a diverse audience. It recorded albums in Spanish on one side and English on the other. By the mid-1980s, the band — and Gloria — had become a worldwide hit.

In the years since, Gloria Estefan’s popularity has soared with a series of top-10 hits. Even a serious auto accident in 1990 did not stop her for long; she returned with a new album and a world tour less than a year later. In 2000, Estefan was honored with an Award of Merit at the American Music Awards.

Estefan has been described as “a veritable one-woman advertisement for the American dream.” Writers often note her ability to balance family life with a skyrocketing career and a desire to help others.

— From Current Biography, 1995
Spanish is the second most widely spoken language in the country. In some states, such as California, Spanish might soon replace English as the first language of the majority of people.

Food, likewise, is an identifiable Hispanic element present in the United States. Tacos, burritos and quesadillas are now almost as common as hamburgers and fries.

Hispanic-Americans have had enormous influence in the arts and entertainment, sports, and politics. Their achievements are among the many celebrated during the observance of National Hispanic Heritage Month and other festivals and celebrations.

### Activities

13) Find and clip stories, photos, and other information from the newspaper that illustrate Hispanic-American contributions to our society. Discuss what life would be like without these cultural influences.

14) In small groups, identify a problem facing the Hispanic-American community in your area or in the nation as a whole. Make note of the causes and effects of this problem, then discuss possible solutions. Write a letter to the editor or an editorial outlining your thoughts.

15) As a class, brainstorm a list of Hispanic-Americans in sports, entertainment, and politics. Pick one to research. Then write a feature story about him or her.

16) Search your newspapers for ads for Mexican restaurants. Invite the owner of one of the advertised businesses to speak to your class about Mexican food. Prior to his or her visit, prepare a list of reporter’s questions.

17) With a partner, create a newspaper ad for a Cinco de Mayo festival or other Hispanic-American celebration. Before you design the ad, discuss whom the ad will target. Display the ads on a classroom or school bulletin board.

18) Find an English-to-Spanish dictionary on the Internet or use one in book form to translate common English words to Spanish.

### Not one culture

Although there are similarities among Hispanic groups, there is no single Hispanic-American race. On the contrary, Hispanic-Americans represent a variety of races and cultures.

Until 1980, there was no category for Hispanic origin on the U.S. Census.

### What’s in a word?

Many of the words Americans are familiar with today have their origins in Spanish. Such words as alligator, cork, lasso, potato, rodeo, tomato, and vanilla are derived from this widely spoken language. Even some American states and cities are derived from Spanish. They include California, Florida, and San Francisco.
A Timeline of Outstanding Achievements

1968
Hispanic researcher Luis Alvarez wins the Nobel Prize for work with subatomic particles.

1970
American Indian Press Association is founded, and distributes news to 150 Indian newspapers.

1971
Romana Acosta Banuelos becomes the first Mexican-American U.S. treasurer.

1973
Los Angeles elects Thomas Bradley as its first black mayor.

1983
Subrahmanyan Chandrasekhar, a native of India, shares the Nobel Prize for work on the death of stars.

1984
Black leader Jesse Jackson makes an unsuccessful bid for the Democratic nomination for president.

1985
Wilma Mankiller is the first modern woman to lead the Cherokee Nation in Oklahoma.

1986
Franklin Chang-Diaz, a Costa Rican with Chinese ancestors, becomes the first Hispanic in space.

1988
Hispanic actor Edward James Olmos receives an Academy Award nomination for Best Actor.

1994
Hispanic chemist Mario Molina wins a Nobel Prize for research on the threat of chemicals to the ozone layer.

1995
The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum, designed by architect I.M. Pei, a Chinese native, opens in Cleveland, Ohio.

1996
Time magazine names Dr. David Ho, a pioneer in AIDS research and Taiwan native, as its Man of the Year.

1997
Seven black men are awarded the Medal of Honor, the highest award for bravery, for their efforts in World War II.

1998
Yo-Yo Ma, a cellist of Chinese descent, wins the Grammy Award for best classical album.

1999
The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum opens in Cleveland, Ohio.

People of Diversity and Distinction

Tiger Woods

When Eldrick “Tiger” Woods was a mere 6 months old, he watched his father hit golf balls from his crib and began imitating his swing. Not surprising, considering Woods grew to become one of the world’s best and most popular professional golfers.

Woods did catch the world by surprise when, at age 21, he won the 1997 Masters Tournament with a record score of 270 — 18 under par. He was the youngest to ever win that prestigious tournament and the first major championship winner of African or Asian heritage. He has since won many other “majors.”

Born in 1975, Woods is the son of Earl and Kultida Woods. His father is a retired lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Army. The elder Woods was the first African-American baseball player in the Big Eight Conference and a Green Beret in Vietnam. His mother, Kultida, is a native of Thailand.

Woods also has Native American, Chinese, and white ancestors.

Woods began to capture the attention of the golf world at a very young age. At 3, he shot 48 for nine holes and was featured in Golf Digest at age 5. He won several junior tournaments, including U.S. Junior Amateurs titles in 1992 and 1993. Woods won his first pro tour title.
### Activities

19) This timeline gives you only the basic information. Find out “the rest of the story” by learning more about one of the people or events listed here. Write a story based on your findings.

20) Through stories in your newspaper, follow a multicultural issue. Create your own timeline to show minority group advancements and achievements pertaining to that issue. Use headlines, photographs, and other artwork from the newspaper to turn your timeline into a bulletin-board display.
Asian-Americans

Americans of Asian descent make up only 3.6 percent of the total U.S. population, yet they are the fastest-growing minority. In 2000, there were about 10.2 million Asian-Americans; by 2020, the population is expected to reach 20 million.

How they came to America:

Asian-Americans make up the newest minority group in America. People of Asian heritage didn’t start emigrating to this country until about 150 years ago.

The first group of Asian immigrants were the hundreds of thousands of Chinese who came to this country to mine gold in California or to work on U.S. railroads between 1850 and 1882. Thousands of Japanese followed in the late 1800s to work on sugar plantations in Hawaii. Others went to California, Oregon, and Washington to work in a variety of jobs, from fishing to mining to building railroads. Some opened small businesses. Filipinos and Koreans also began emigrating to the United States, mostly to work in Hawaii or California.

Millions of Asians have come to the United States since 1965, many of them from China, India, the Philippines, and South Korea. Following the U.S. withdrawal from Vietnam in 1973, Vietnamese, Cambodians, and Laotians also started emigrating.

Government surveys show that, as a whole, Asian-Americans are better educated, healthier, and have higher incomes than other Americans. Many run small businesses that often are multigenerational family operations.

People of Diversity and Distinction

Maya Ying Lin

When she was only 21 years old, Maya Ying Lin was chosen to design the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C. At the time, 1981, this daughter of Chinese immigrants was a senior architecture major at Yale University.

The memorial — two adjoining black granite walls with the inscribed names of all Americans who died in the Vietnam War — attracts the most visitors of any such memorial in the United States. It also includes a bronze sculpture of three servicemen.

Seven years after she designed the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, Lin was signed on for another challenging project — to create a monument to the Civil Rights Movement in Montgomery, Ala. The monument she designed was inspired by the words of civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr.:

“We will not be satisfied until ‘justice rolls down like waters and righteousness like a mighty stream.’”
Asia is the world’s largest continent, and on it lie 49 diverse countries. Asian-Americans hail from all those countries, but most come from China, the largest. Among the many languages spoken by Americans of Asian descent are Chinese, Hindi, Japanese, Tagalog, Tahi, and Vietnamese. And the religions they practice include Buddhism, Confucianism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Shinto, Taoism, and Christianity.

### Ethnic background of Asian-Americans

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>23.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Filipino</td>
<td>18.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian Indian</td>
<td>16.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnamese</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korean</td>
<td>10.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japanese</td>
<td>7.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Based on 2000 census information*

21) Find and clip stories, photos, and other information from the newspaper that illustrate Asian-American contributions to our culture. Discuss what life would be like without these important contributions.

22) Japanese, Chinese, Thai, Vietnamese, and Middle Eastern restaurants are popping up everywhere in the United States as Americans acquire a taste for Asian foods. Ask a friend or family member to go with you to an Asian restaurant in your community. Afterward, write a newspaper-style review of your dining experience.

23) Do some research on China, Japan, or another Asian country. Compare one element of that country’s culture to America’s. How is it different? Alike? Imagine that an Asian-American from that country has written a newspaper columnist for advice on how to deal with the differences. Then write a letter of advice, like Ann Landers or Dear Abby.

24) The Japanese form of poetry, called haiku, consists of 17 syllables arranged in three lines. The first line has five syllables; the second seven; and the third five syllables. Write a haiku describing the “changing face of America.”

25) Invite a Chinese or Japanese chef to speak to your class about the nutritional values of the Asian diet. Afterward, write a newspaper story outlining the most important points.
Native Americans

Even though they once made up the entire population of the land called America, Native Americans today make up the smallest of the country’s four major minority groups. About 2.5 million live in the United States — a mere nine-tenths of 1 percent of the population.*

* As a group, Native Americans also include Eskimos and Aleuts. This study, however, focuses on Native American Indians.

A land all their own:

People had been living in the Americas for a long time before Christopher Columbus “discovered” the New World. Because Columbus thought he had reached the Indies (then China, India, Japan, and the East Indies), he called the people he met here Indians. Today, the term most often used is Native Americans.

Like other groups, the Native Americans also came to this land from somewhere else. The first group is believed to have come from Asia some 30,000 years ago across the Bering Strait, which was once dry land, to Alaska. They eventually spread out from the far north to the southern tip of South America.

When Europeans first came to the New World to explore, hunt, and start a new life, the Native Americans welcomed them, and the two cultures exchanged knowledge and traditions.

But conflicts soon arose. Many Europeans tried to understand the Indian lifestyle and treated them fairly. Others took advantage of the Native Americans and tried to force them to adopt European ways.

Eventually, the Indians fought back — especially as the whites took more Native American land. But it was a battle they could not win. Thousands of Native Americans died at the hands of the settlers’ guns and new diseases.

Today, many Native Americans live on reservations, special areas of land set aside by the government where they can practice and preserve their tribal customs.

People of Diversity and Distinction

Wilma Mankiller

When Wilma Mankiller took over as chief of the Cherokee Nation in 1985, she became the first woman to lead a major North American Indian tribe.

One of 11 children, Mankiller is the daughter of a full-blooded Cherokee father and white mother who grew up in poverty on an Oklahoma farm. From her own experience, she saw firsthand the problems Native Americans face.

A social worker by profession, Mankiller has developed programs that allow her people to help themselves. It is her goal that Native Americans attain high self-esteem by becoming self-sufficient.

Through her efforts, living conditions have improved and job opportunities have increased for the Cherokee people. They also now have better access to health care and education.

At the same time, Mankiller has encouraged members of the tribe to preserve their precious tribal culture and to let others know that traditional Native American life is thriving.
The Changing Face of America: 13

Tribes of the United States

There were once more than 300 Native American tribes in this country. Some you are probably familiar with, thanks in part to the popularity of movies, television shows, and books with Western themes. But others you might never have heard of. Here are just a few:

Apache Erie Oneida
Arapaho Hopi Paiute
Blackfoot Iroquois Pomo
Cayuga Mohave Seneca
Cherokee Mohawk Shawnee
Cree Natchez Sauk
Crow Nez Perce Timucua
Dakota (Sioux) Ojibwa Ute
Delaware Omaha Winnebago

We all know tepee, moccasin, squaw, powwow, and tomahawk are Native American in origin. But did you know tuxedo, toboggan, and stogie also have Native American roots?

Today, more than 1,000 words of Native American origin are part of the English language. Most are used to describe the natural world — plants, animals, rivers, lakes, and mountains. They include Niagara Falls, the Adirondack and Appalachian mountains, and the Denali and Shenandoah national parks. Opossum, chipmunk, muskrat, raccoon, and caribou are Native American words. And, the names of half the states, including Arizona, Iowa, Kentucky, and Utah, have Native American roots.

What’s in a Word?

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Can you imagine a country where all the people are the same color, come from the same traditions, hold the same religious beliefs, and speak the same language?

It would be a pretty ordinary place to live, wouldn’t it? As one person put it, “When you are surrounded by sameness you get only variations of the same.” How true that is!

America, of course, is anything but ordinary. It is a colorful, ever-changing country full of diversity.

But some people don’t like diversity. Living with people of different racial, ethnic, and cultural heritage threatens them. And when these people let their fears take over, problems arise.

Such problems are not new to the United States; they are always present. That’s why it’s important to take a long, hard look at our diverse nation and to understand the problems that can divide us. Only then can you begin to work toward the solutions that will unite us.

Activities

34) Many movies deal with issues concerning diversity. Check the movie listings and reviews in your newspaper. Are there movies centered on cultural or racial themes? Discuss how movies reinforce or dispel racial or cultural stereotypes. Rent such a movie to show in class, then write a review about how it handles a diversity issue.

35) Racial tensions can lead to violence. Look in the newspaper for stories and photographs about such violence. Discuss with your teacher and classmates some alternative actions when confronting racism and other problems.

36) Find newspaper examples of the positive effects of diversity. Clip one example and work with your classmates in designing a bulletin-board display.

37) The daily newspaper reflects our multicultural society. Using items you clip from the newspaper, make a collage that illustrates how our varied cultures form a vital, vibrant society.

38) Watch your newspaper for examples of prejudice, stereotyping, discrimination, and racism in action. What were the consequences of these actions? Share one example with the class.

39) Watch your newspaper for events aimed at uniting your diverse community. Identify the steps being taken, then, in small groups, discuss whether you think those steps will be effective. What else could be done to bring your community closer together?

40) Using your newspaper and other resources, make a list of reasons why someone from another country would want to live in your community. Work with a partner to create a newspaper ad promoting your community.

41) From politicians and professional athletes to musicians and movie directors, many of today’s newsmakers are members of minority groups. Using your daily newspaper, select a minority leader who is currently in the news and do research to learn more about this person. Then, write a short feature story, focusing on the person’s achievements.

42) Research and interviews are a critical part of a newspaper reporter’s job. Research your family’s racial, ethnic, and cultural background by interviewing your parents, grandparents, and other relatives. Write a brief family history.
Experts believe that many of the problems our nation encounters stem from fear — fear of people based on stereotypes, fear of their beliefs and traditions, and fear of losing jobs to them.

Although there are many laws in place to stop the discrimination that results from such fears, many problems remain. Here are a few of the ways these fears manifest themselves:

**Prejudice**
Prejudice is negative feelings or attitudes toward a group of people that are not based on fact but on preconceived ideas and notions. Synonyms for prejudice are bigotry and intolerance.

**Stereotyping**
A stereotype is an oversimplified opinion, idea, or belief about an entire group of people. This generalization is often negative.

**Discrimination**
Discrimination is treating someone differently because of his or her race, religious beliefs, gender, age, abilities, etc. It is prejudice in action.

**Racism**
Racism occurs when a person thinks one particular race is superior to all others. As a result, this person discriminates against people of other races and, in extreme cases, tries to control or even hurt them.

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**Getting along in a diverse world**

Our changing nation is sure to keep on changing. That's why it is important to learn how to get along with people no matter what their beliefs or backgrounds.

How can you start this process? Try this exercise:
Walk around your classroom for 45 seconds, studying everyone else. When the time is up, select someone that you think is the most different from you.

Then sit down with that person and start talking about things you like and dislike. Make a list of things you have in common and share it with the class.

This exercise can teach you to not make assumptions about another person until you get to know and understand that person a little better. After all, you want the same courtesy.

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**Taking action**

When it comes to being hired for a job, gaining acceptance to a college, and renting or buying a home, all Americans are supposed to have equal opportunity. But because of discrimination, that has not always been the case.

That's why many businesses, state and local governments, and colleges have policies known as affirmative action. Such policies include a variety of techniques used to fix problems caused by discrimination, especially in the workplace.

Affirmative action has done much to end discrimination, but it is itself surrounded by controversy. Some say it is time to do away with affirmative action because minorities have now gained acceptance and no longer need special treatment. Others say without it, minorities will once again find it more difficult to make advances.

What do you think? Find out more about these policies and stage a classroom debate.